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Eric Bentley: Off-Broadway

New Republic

More Light on Dixon-Yates

by Michael Straight

What Is Bevan's Future? . . . Iain Colquhoun

New School of Fiction . . . . Malcolm Cowley

Finletter on Security . . . . Gordon Harrison

A Writer's Evolution . . . . . Irving Howe

New Jersey: Battleground of the Two Republican Parties

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T. R. B.
★
Washington Wire

Eisenhower has had no press conference at Denver for six weeks. James Reston, *New York Times* Washington Bureau chief, came from Denver citing as his most vivid impression "the casual procedure of the Presidential official family"; so casual, Reston says, as to make it hard to believe "that the President is really running the government from his Denver headquarters." Columnist Doris Fleeson rubs her eyes in Denver: "No President in history has spent so much time out of Washington with so little apparent evidence that the reins of government remain strongly in his hands." Right-wing publisher David Lawrence complains, "Political battles aren't won when a President takes a vacation during the month of September and much of October in an election year."

Ike has a terribly difficult problem. He must not alienate Democrats any more than they now are since he needs their support next year on tariffs, housing, the Bricker Amendment and all the rest; yet at the same time he risks alienating the powerful Republicans who demand that he campaign and denounce the common foe. Ah, if he could stay clear of politics as he does of Washington! In 1953 he was in the Capital only 251 days, away 114; in 1954 it is about the same ratio.

Eisenhower strikes us as a Constitutional monarch in search of a Prime Minister. Things were easier when he had Taft for the latter job. Since then he has tried Knowland, but Knowland reveals his inherent lack of respect by such acts as sending him a telegram demanding that he break off relations with Russia, and making it public before it reaches the White House—the traditional technique of political opponents. Few Presidents have delegated so much power as Ike. He has a passion for avoiding quarrels with Congress even if it means appeasing McCarthy. Reluctantly he has intervened once or twice, and been surprised each time by his own success.

We abridge some comment we ran across last week:

> For the next two years the new President, although he was merely weak and not a reactionary himself, allowed the reactionary forces to regain headway. . . . Much of this sort of invisible governing was beginning to be notable and he proved incapable of dealing with forces which, in many cases, he scarcely recognized. . . . In spite of his virtues, and they were many, [he] was unable to inspire the nation.

The man? Not perhaps the person you think. The book is *Epic of America*; the author, James Truslow Adams; the President, Taft.

Back in 1946 Congress passed the Full Employment Act. This pledged the government to keep the economy operating at "maximum employment, production, and purchasing power." President and Congress are sworn to support this policy. But unemployment has doubled in a year, production is down $9 billion and personal income is declining, too. Like most portentous statements this one means little until implemented. Congress passed the law and forgot it. But this election may revive it. That is because the marginal fringe of Congressional districts where there is unemployment is probably going to switch in large part from Republican to Democrat. When post-election analysts search to explain the prospective Democratic victory, they will attribute it to industrial and farm discontent. It seems inevitable that a new Democratic Congress will start to implement the Full Employment Act by strenuous measures. Do not underestimate the significance of this law even if it is a sleeper. Truman, in his final Economic Message to Congress said: "The Employment Act of 1946 is one of the most fundamental compacts in domestic affairs which the people through their government have made during my tenure as President."

If Mr. Jones makes a fat income this year and goes in the hole the next, the tax department does not average the two. Jones pays the full amount for the good year, and that ends it. Not so a corporation under the new tax bill. A corporation does well this year but runs a deficit in 1955; the philanthropic Treasury collects the full tax and then hands much or all of it back again next year to even things up. The theory is that this is good for business and hence for Jones: "What's good for General Motors is good for the USA." The United Press figures that tax rebates to corporations under this neat little businessman's gadget will equal $400 million next year. How Jones would feel if he understood about it nobody can say.

This column expects the Senate to censure McCarthy by a big vote. We would not expect it to try to oust him, or even necessarily remove him from committee chairmanships if the GOP retains control. But this won't quite end things either. The Watkins Committee found McCarthy in contempt of the Senate in refusing to tell an earlier group whether he had pocketed his admirers' contributions intended to help fight Communism. The Senate will probably not demand an accounting. But until he does answer, his contempt citation stands. The situation carries no specific penalty but can cramp Joe's style. In bald terms, the Senate will have condemned McCarthy for not answering the direct question, "Are you a crook?" And until he does answer, with figures, the question can be asked again, by anybody, at any time.

Notes: Ike's recent attack on "intellectuals" seems odd from the former head of one of America's big universities. . . . People are terrified today over so many things: possible war in the Pacific, disunity in Europe, the H-bomb; how much happier we were when all we had "to fear was fear itself." . . . This is the first election in which the alibis have started before the result. Columnists David Lawrence and Sam Lubell evidently expect GOP defeat; the first blames it on Ike, saying he has "failed his own party"; the second defends Ike but predicts it will be "the most misunderstood election in our lifetime."

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Noteworthy This Week

BEHIND THE HEADLINES

Wilson Hedges

AFTER a delay of nearly two years, it looks as if there may finally be a public debate on the merits of Defense Secretary Charles E. Wilson's arms-procurement program. Wilson is still avoiding the issue, treating Sen. Henry M. Jackson's (D, Wash.) original challenge (*NR*, Oct. 4) as a political attack and a charge of favoritism, but Jackson has not been sidetracked and some daily newspapers have begun informing their readers on the basic questions.

When, on September 27, Jackson revealed that General Motors had in 18 months of Republican rule received more defense contracts than all other automobile manufacturers put together and had become the sole producer of many essential weapons, he was careful not to accuse former GM President Wilson of favoritism. His question was: how, in the face of atomic and hydrogen destructive power, and the desperate financial position of the four "independent" automobile firms, can this concentration of production be justified?

If Wilson had good reasons for reversing the broad-mobilization-base program, this was his opportunity to argue them. Instead he chose to answer that he had not favored General Motors, but had only carried out commitments made by the Truman Administration. Not only did that answer evade the point at issue, it seemed a deliberate attempt to mislead: the Truman Administration made commitments to the other automobile firms too, and Wilson cancelled these, $395 million worth.

Having been called a liar by Wilson, Jackson has answered in kind and has asked the Pentagon for specific statistics on contract cancellations for individual firms. The Pentagon says it will take a long time to get those figures ready.

In the meantime the Chrysler Corporation has been awarded a $160 million M-48 tank contract, and Jackson has pointed out that once again production of a crucial weapon has been concentrated in one, easily-knocked-out plant.

Despite his protestations and evasions, Wilson has in practice scrapped the broad-mobilization-base program developed in World War II. He presumably has reasons. The Republican Congress has not required him to argue those reasons publicly. But if the Democrats take control in 1955, Richard B. Russell of Georgia will head the Armed Services Committee, and Carl Vinson, also of Georgia, its counterpart in the House—tough questioners.

Britain Gambles

EDEN'S London Conference pledge to Europe has changed the whole pattern of postwar politics in Europe. And it has provided the one essential condition for persuading the French Assembly to ratify whatever plan for German rearmament the governments may draft.

It was a triumph for French diplomacy. The main hope of French policy long has been to bind Britain to the Continent without America, so that the gradual development of a Great European Unity might in time make possible lessening of American, as well as Russian pressure. And it has been precisely Britain's fear that this might be the ultimate result that has made her so reluctant to assume obligations except in proportion to America. Yet last week she threw this principle overboard. Eden's pledge to keep four British divisions and the Tactical Air Force at full strength on the Continent for another 4¼ years was preceded by Dulles' frank admission that America's commitments now might well be less.

There is of course hard common sense behind this change of front. For it is Britain's strategic interest which binds her inextricably to the Continent of Europe—her major political and economic interests lie elsewhere. So in fact she is now committed to strategic cooperation with the Continent whether America joins her or not. None the less, the price of this revolution in British policy is a high one. The cost in money and manpower alone will be tremendous—it means the continuation of two years universal military service *ad infinitum*. For this reason alone the Conservative Government would not have dared to make the pledge had not the Labour Party Conference protected its rear by the narrow vote in favor of German rearmament on the previous day.

The political risks are also grave. With half the British army permanently assigned to Europe, Britain's diplomatic influence outside Europe is necessarily diminished. She may find that she has become a Great Power in Europe at the expense of ceasing to be a Great World Power. And the spectre that, now Britain is holding the European baby, America may feel it safe to reduce her commitments in the East Atlantic will haunt British foreign policy. Thus once the new European defense framework becomes a reality, Britain's first preoccupation will be the strengthening of the Atlantic Community, particularly in the political and economic fields. R. A. Butler's vigorous offensive at the International Monetary Fund in Washington is a foretaste of what is to come.

London DENIS HEALEY, M.P.

How Many . . . ?

TWO WEEKS before election-time, the Administration has revived the discredited "numbers game" (*NR*, March 15). Now the number of federal employees "separated under the loyalty-security program" is given at 6,926: 2,611 fired, 4,315 resigned.

To the *New Republic's* often-repeated question: "How many were disloyal?" there is this much of an answer: the files of 1,743 contained "information indicating, in various degrees, subversive activities, or subversive associations."

Six hundred and eighteen may have been sex perverts; 2,272 may have committed felonies or misdemeanors; and more than half the 6,926 "security risks"—3,657—are lumped in the useful category "any other type or types of information" not covered above.

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Paris Dispatch Bureaucrats and Alcohol

A new phase in Western Europe is beginning—a phase of military co-operation, political co-existence and economic competition. In each of the major countries—Britain, France, West Germany and Italy — domestic political alignments and patterns which have existed for a number of years are likely to be changed. The form of the rearrangements and the spirit in which they are made are almost certain to be greatly influenced by the results of the Congressional election in the US.

At long last Sir Winston Churchill is nearing the end of his period of service, and Anthony Eden has forged ahead of R. A. Butler or any other candidate for the succession.

Pierre Mendès-France keeps on winning battles, but each victory reveals more clearly the length and the difficulty of the war for political survival that lies ahead for him. For Konrad Adenauer the field is even less quiet. And in Italy, neither Mario Scelba, Amintore Fanfani nor any other Christian Democratic leader can be sure of riding out successfully the storm of envenomed doubt caused by the Montesi scandal.

During the next few weeks hard work by a half dozen inter-governmental committees will be tying up the technical loose ends of the London Conference's final act into a political formula acceptable to the participants in the three forthcoming meetings in Paris, and later to the parliaments of the Brussels Treaty powers. By the end of October the structure of NATO will have been changed to permit West German membership; and that of the Brussels Treaty organization extended and strengthened to provide the framework for long-continuing military co-operation.

In France, West Germany and Italy, the task of formal ratification of the final agreements will inevitably be complicated by the domestic situations. The size and composition of the majority by which the French National Assembly has just authorized Mendès-France to participate in the last stages of the negotiations are significant. The *immobilisme* which has stultified French foreign policy in recent years has come to its end. The Assembly will probably meet the Premier's demand for ratification by the end of the month of November, but in a fashion that may shift the basis of resistance from the international to the national plane.

This can be a serious matter, nevertheless, for the orderly development of the relations between the nations of the Western alliance. It may be of relatively little importance that, in the Trieste settlement, Italy and Yugoslavia have only grudgingly agreed to co-exist and that the agreement, while *de facto*, is not *de jure*. It is much more serious that the French die-hard "Europeans" insist upon seeing the shadow of the Wehrmacht and the OKW behind the new West German army created by the London formula, that, therefore, the limit of their willingness to co-operate with the new sovereign West Germany is the acceptance of a reluctant co-existence; that, in sum, the pattern of Franco-German reconciliation, though *de jure*, is not *de facto*.

Moreover, even co-existence, if not co-operation on a friendly basis, between France and West Germany depends for its success less on military and political developments than on economic ones. The fears which have so long fostered *immobilisme*, hampering the common cause of military security, can in the last analysis be removed only when—and to the extent—that the French accept basic economic and social changes at home that permit them to compete economically with the Germans.

This has long been the fundamental thesis of Mendès-France. In terms of his plan for a domestic New Deal, the ratification of the London-Paris agreements about the re-making of Europe will not be an end, but the start of the remaking of a France that can remain the equal of Germany. It would be a serious mistake, however, to assume that the ratification also means real acceptance of his thesis by the great majority of his countrymen who have supported him on foreign policy, and especially by those in a position to oppose it effectively.

For the New Deal, as Mendès-France sees it, calls for changes in personal attitudes and habits, for efforts and sacrifices unwelcome to the typical Frenchman of any political party or social class. Popular though he has become, the Premier is far from a typical Frenchman.

By temperament he accepts easily a Crippsian austerity. In a country where the average person spends more of his income on food than the citizen of any other country, he eats very little. In the provincial towns where he is cheered warmly by crowds in the street, the lights go out soon after nine o'clock at night;

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but the day-time hero spends little time in bed, and has the ideas of Thomas Edison about the need for sleep. In a country proud of having the best cooking on earth, he prefers the English cuisine; his favorite dish is bacon and eggs, and he can make a satisfying meal of porridge, tea, toast and marmalade. But unlike the Englishmen of his social and political station, he cares nothing at all about the way he dresses, often receiving official visitors in an old pullover and baggy trousers. As an intellectual, his deep dislike of the movies—arty as well as Westerns—may perhaps be understandable. But in the land of the *Comedie Française,* he goes to the theatre only when he is forced to. And his reading is nowadays largely about economics and all his hobbies are summed up in a single word—politics.

But the worst of the Premier's sins—in the eyes of the typical Frenchman—is that he drinks practically not at all, or worse still, sips at state banquets from a glass filled with a revolting beverage called pasteurized milk. And here, more than taste is involved. About five million of France's (now nearly) 43 million people earn their livelihood, directly or indirectly, from the manufacture and sale of alcoholic drinks. It was a very brave act on the part of Mendès-France to use his power to issue executive decrees against the enormously strong alcohol lobby—the growers of grapes and beets. But, though he considers alcoholism the "worst scourge of France," costing the state billions of dollars yearly in money and in bad health, it remains the fact that the typical Frenchman consumes more alcohol than the average citizen of any other country.

Mendes-France wants surgical methods in changing the French system; his closest collaborator in the launching of the New Deal, Edgar Faure, would be content with the gradualism of medicine. The Premier insists that, to compete with Germany, French production, exports and personal sacrifices must go up; costs, prices (now an average of 15 percent above the level of other countries), subsidies, guarantees and other protective devices must come down.

His worst enemy, it should be noted, is neither the parliament nor the people. For, as has often been said, France is not governed; she is administered, by the strongest civil service in the Western world. As the *London Times* points out:

> The mighty leviathan of the French machinery of State is an administrative apparatus which has remained virtually inviolate—even with all the renovating and codifying work of Napoleon—since the mercantilist hey-day of the absolute monarchs. No class in France can so certainly prevent change as the bureaucracy who, as defenders of immemorial custom and ancient law, tenaciously resist the tide of modern ideas and methods at all levels, from the national to the local. The official classes, who made the revolution, cling to the powers they then gained as implacably as the peasants still cling to their lands appropriated at the same time.

Mendès-France understands this quite well; and, unlike his predecessors, has set out to change the situation. Part of the resentment against him results from the fact that since he took office, he has been carrying out a quiet—but far-reaching—purge in various key sectors of the permanent bureaucracy; it is an antagonism that resembles the bitter ones aroused by President Franklin Roosevelt's efforts to change the United States Supreme Court and get rid of what he termed horse-and-buggyism.

He also deliberately dramatizes his intentions. At an extraordinary meeting of some 150 superprefects, prefects and other top administrative officials, he said bluntly that the principal job of a government is to be obeyed. On the other hand, he is visiting, one by one, all the regions of the country, not only seeking to mobilize public opinion behind his efforts, but also bidding for the support of local officials, setting up special economic councils from their ranks, inviting and accepting their suggestions for improving things.

It would also be an error to assume that the difficulties he faces come only from the lobbies, the big businessmen, the reactionaries and the encrusted bureaucrats, they also come from below, from the people, especially the workers. France happens to be a country in which an hour of industrial work costs more than in Britain, Germany, Belgium and Holland; but it is also a country in which a man-hour of work is generally less productive than in other advanced countries. The French birth rate is going up—the population, which was 40 million in 1946, is now nearly 43 million and will probably be 44 million in 1958—but family allowances are more generous than anywhere else in the world. A family with one worker gets about $33 a month for one child, about $56 for two, and about $80 for three. A family with five children gets more than the legal minimum wage, well over the amount earned by 950,000 workers in private employment.

The effect of such expenditure on the economic system is also fully understood by the Premier. He has suggested that, in order to make France able to compete with her partners, especially Germany, in the international economic field, the others should follow the French example. But there will be firm resistance to such a plan; and Mendès-France will be caught between them and the resistance at home.

The results of the US election figure in the next phase for France, and for Western Europe in general, because the steps which the US Congress takes—or fails to take—to put the international economic clock forward rather than backward will help—or hurt—France in removing some of the economic obstacles to a competition that can change co-existence with Germany into co-operation.

Paris FRANK GORRELL

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More Light on Dixon-Yates

by Michael Straight

"IT'S ON the rails and the rails are greased," said Edgar Dixon's assistant, Paul Hallingby, in September, 1954. He meant that Dixon's contract to build a steam plant in TVA territory with the aid of the Atomic Energy Commission was as good as through. No corruption was implied by Hallingby, and yet grease was the right word. For while the Eisenhower Administration concealed the terms of the contract, and refused as late as mid-October to concede that it had been approved, it greased the rails by obtaining endorsement of the contract by Congress in general terms. The endorsement contained a safeguard—that the contract be kept before the Congress for at least 30 days while Congress is in session. At the insistence of the White House, however, the Joint Congressional Atomic Energy Committee is being reconvened two days after the November elections for the purpose of nullifying the safeguard and rushing the Dixon-Yates contract through.

It is known as the Dixon-Yates contract, but the term conceals its origin and does injustice to the two men who were used rather as instruments of the Administration's design. For the White House has released the correspondence within the Administration that led to the contract and it suggests that the scheme could be more aptly called the Strauss-Hughes contract after the two advisers of President Eisenhower who forced it through.

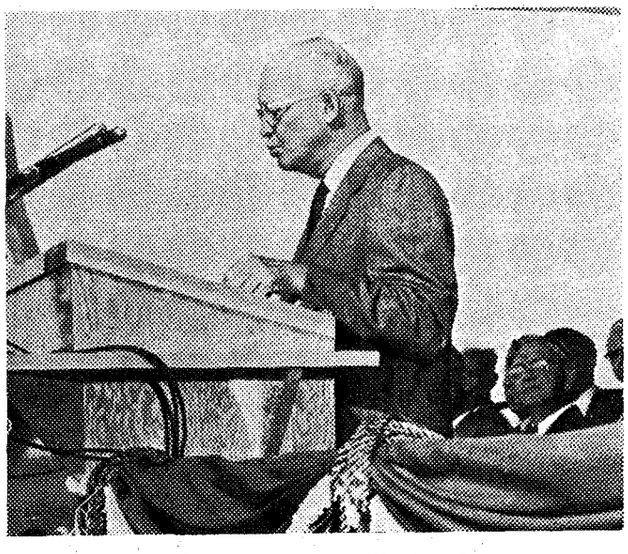
The two men are Lewis Strauss, Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, and Rowland Hughes, Acting Director of the Bureau of the Budget. Neither man is charged with developing power policy for the United States, and yet a shift in established power policy is clearly their intent. Their attitude is summarized by Hughes in his memorandum of April 21 which gained the President's endorsement of the plan the two men had worked out with Dixon and Yates. "The proposal," Hughes wrote, "provides a means for meeting the power requirements of TVA without the government building new steam plants."

The power requirements of TVA increase each day. The normal loads of municipalities throughout the region are rising steadily. The Air Force is demanding more electricity to drive its installations. The Atomic Energy Commission alone has contracted for more power in the area than all the electricity generated by the TVA in 1953. TVA must meet these demands or fail. In turn the Eisenhower Administration is charged with responsibility for maintaining ample power supplies in the TVA region. It is charged further with minimizing costs on the 56 billion kilowatt hours of electricity purchased each year by the AEC. An addition of one tenth of one cent on each kilowatt hour, which is a fraction of the gap between TVA and private utility rates, means $50 million a year in the costs of government.

In conflict with these responsibilities is the Administration's desire for economy, and its general commitment to work with the private utilities. The Washington spokesman of these utilities, Purcell Smith, claims that a major achievement of his $500,000 a year lobby is in cutting appropriations for TVA.

The time for decision came for the Eisenhower Administration in late 1953 when the TVA directors presented to the Bureau of the Budget their proposed budget for 1955. The budget included an appropriation for a new steam plant urgently needed for the Memphis area. Caught between the Administration's predilections and the region's pressing needs Joseph Dodge, Director of the Bureau of the Budget, turned to Strauss and the AEC for a way out. In recreating the Administration's attitude late in 1953, the Executive Office of the President explains in its Memorandum of August 21:

> It seemed obvious the only way of meeting the anticipated requirements of TVA in 1957 without building additional government steam plants was to relieve the TVA of some of its heavy AEC load.



President Eisenhower at McNary Dam

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So, on December 21, 1953, Strauss, Dodge and their deputies set out to secure an increase in private power facilities to replace TVA power used by the AEC.

The place chosen by Strauss was the AEC's plant at Paducah, Kentucky. Three years before TVA had been called on to provide power at Paducah. Its plan was cut short at the last moment by Thomas Murray, one of the five AEC commissioners. Murray held, with some logic, that since the power was for another agency, and the plant was outside the TVA region, private utilities should be given the opportunity to compete. "I was raised in a world of private enterprise and particularly in an atmosphere of private power operations," he later explained. He believed that given the opportunity, private enterprise would show its superiority over the TVA. So the power load at Paducah was split between two plants, one built at Shawnee by TVA, the other at Joppa by a private syndicate, Electric Energy, Inc. The TVA plant met its requirements and produced power for $165 per kilowatt of capability; the Joppa plant ran $37 million over its estimates and cost $188 per kilowatt of capability.

MURRAY conceded TVA's victory at Paducah. Strauss and Dodge refused to concede defeat. Instead Dodge informed the TVA directors that their request for new plant appropriations was denied. Although power needs were pressing and no alternatives were in sight President Eisenhower in presenting his Budget Message to Congress on January 20, 1954, laid down as established policy a position that was barely conceived. No appropriations for new power units would be asked for TVA, the President told Congress. Instead, he declared: "Arrangements are being made to reduce, by the fall of 1957, existing commitments of the Tennessee Valley Authority to the Atomic Energy Commission by 500,000 to 600,000 kilowatts."

What arrangements? On December 14, 1953, at the direction of Strauss, Walter Williams, Deputy Manager of the AEC, had written to J. W. McAfee, President of Electric Energy, Inc., to solicit his support in developing the Administration's plan to bypass TVA. On January 4, McAfee replied. He took it for granted that the interest of Chairman Strauss was in checking TVA rather than in providing power for his own agency. He discounted as a practicable means of securing this objective the provision of more private power for the Paducah plant. Instead he proposed a more direct method of undermining TVA. "Dear Walter," he wrote to Williams:

> If I had the responsibility of relieving the national budget of available capital expenditures in the TVA area I would consider:
>
> First that the TVA no longer assume full responsibility for supplying all the needs of municipalities. Thus as present contracts expire these municipalities which need a greater supply than is available from the Authority would be obliged to arrange purchase from others. . . .
>
> Second, arrangements with neighboring companies of TVA to sell their power to the Authority. . . .

The first of these proposals collided frontally with the President's campaign to maintain TVA at maximum efficiency. The second proposal pointed the way ahead to Strauss and to Dodge's successor, Rowland Hughes. The two men met for lunch on January 19 in Strauss' office and reviewed with approval a piece of news sent in by McAfee: in direct negotiations with TVA in an area short of power a subsidiary of Edgar Dixon's Middle South Utilities had offered to furnish TVA with 450,000 kilowatts of power through the construction of a new steam plant.

MIDDLE South Utilities was a holding company that emerged from the chaos and malpractices of the old utility empires. That chaos was exposed in the reports of the Federal Trade Commission issued between 1928 and 1935. "Those reports," the Federal Power Commission later declared in a ruling on one of Middle South's subsidiaries, "portrayed enormous write-ups in electric utility accounts. They showed that accounting abuses and deception were widespread and that they were resorted to for the purpose of concealing rather than disclosing the facts."

In the light of these reports the Federal Trade Commission called on Congress to enact remedial laws "to restore soundness and common honesty in corporate affairs." In response and after the bitterest battle of the New Deal years, Congress passed the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935. The Act required the Securities and Exchange Commission to limit holding companies to "single integrated public utility" systems. It further required the Federal Power Commission to enforce minimal standards in utility company accounts.

One of the most notorious of the companies investigated by the FTC was the Electric Bond and Share Company. Among its properties, spread across the nation, was a group of Southern utilities held through a subsidiary holding company, the Electric Power and Light Corporation. This corporation was ordered disbanded under the "death sentence" clause of the 1935 act. Middle South Utilities was organized in its place. Middle South divorced itself from Electric Bond and Share. It employed its subsidiary, Ebasco, on a contract basis only, and sold the properties that the government ordered dispersed. The SEC found in 1954 that Middle South Utilities was an integrated system within the terms of the 1935 Act. And yet James Stietenroth, secretary-treasurer of one of Middle South's subsidiaries, testified that in terms of operation within the system nothing had changed since 1935.

The four operating companies of Middle South, like those of the Southern Company of Eugene Yates, were overburdened with watered stock. In its investigation

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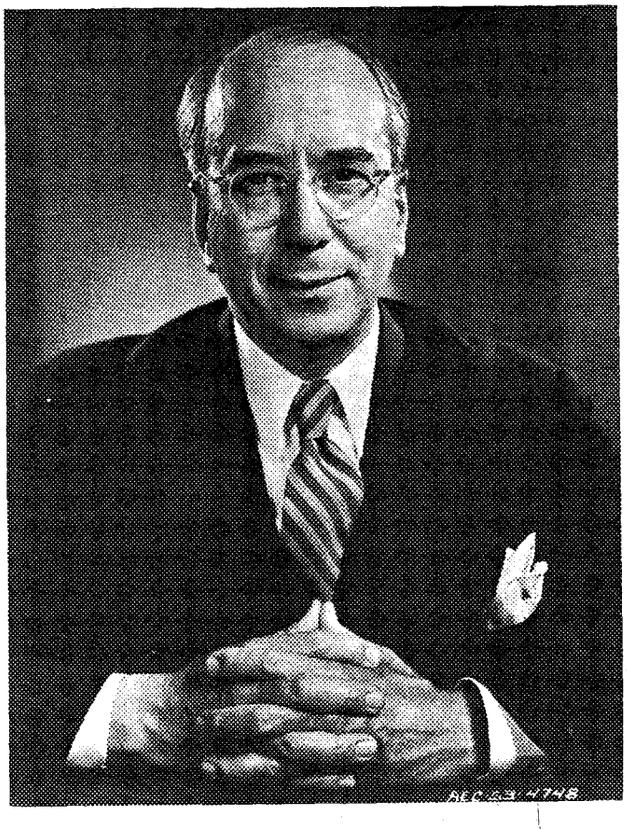
of the Dixon group the Federal Power Commission found that the Mississippi Power and Light Company with an original stock of $17 million was written up by $13 million; the Louisiana Power and Light Company, whose original cost was $18 million, was written up by $12 million; the New Orleans Public Service Company, whose original cost was $44 million, was written up by $8 million, and the Arkansas Power and Light Company, whose original cost was $43 million, was written up by $21 million. The Arkansas Company was found by the FPC to contain an "erroneous entry" of $2.3 million on its accounts. The FPC in its 1950 judgment held:

> In the field of public utility accounting it would be hard to imagine a company more in need of accounting reform than was the Arkansas Power and Light Company. . . . The Company did not even know the investment in its separate departments much less its investment in large items of plant. The depreciation and retirement reserves were grossly inadequate.

This general description was reaffirmed in present-day terms by Stietenroth in his testimony taken during the days in which the Dixon-Yates contract was moving toward final approval. The record of the company he worked for, Mississippi Power and Light, is further shown in a Federal Power Commission ruling of December 31, 1943. After 18 months of examination the FPC ordered the Mississippi Power and Light Company to eliminate $13 million in watered stock. But one Commissioner, John Scott, protested that this action was inadequate and would serve simply to encourage other "recalcitrant and litigious companies who fear the disclosure of the pertinent facts and who by cunning or otherwise conceal or destroy such information." Scott based his conclusion on the fact that during the course of the examination of the Mississippi Company records had disappeared and "at least one witness had placed himself within the tall shadows of a charge of perjury."

EDGAR DIXON was President of Middle South Utilities, and regardless of his system's past performance, it fitted exactly into the Administration's plan in 1954. On January 20, 1954, McAfee brought Dixon to the offices of the AEC. There the two men explained the legal and economic problems raised for Electric Energy, Inc., by the Paducah proposal and the gains to be realized by transforming Dixon's proposal to the TVA into a larger plan to be worked out with the AEC. In a later meeting on the same day McAfee, Dixon, Williams and Hughes prepared the outlines of the Dixon-Yates contract. The August 21 report of the Executive Office of the President records:

> After a review of the problem the utilities people and the Administration representatives both came to the conclusion that to build a plant near Paducah . . . would not be for the best interests of the government, nor would it meet the requirements of the TVA which would find itself with released power at Paducah a long way off from where it was needed in Memphis. . . . It was finally decided . . . to make an arrangement . . . for AEC to buy the power from a new plant in the Memphis area and the TVA to take that power in exchange for the power which it would continue to deliver at Paducah to the AEC.



Atomic Energy Chairman Lewis Strauss

All this was worked out between the President's advisers and the utilities without even informing the TVA. The contract brought together two holding companies in an obvious violation of the spirit of the Holding Company Act, for the purpose of building a power plant 200 miles from its market. It laid aside the claim of national defense which brought the other holding company projects sponsored by the AEC within the Holding Company Act's provisions. At the same time it robbed TVA of authority over its own operations and placed the AEC in the midst of a political battle that bore no relation to its own role assigned to it by law. The TVA directors, when they were at last informed of the project were naturally outraged. So were two of the five Commissioners of the AEC. The two men, Henry Smyth and Eugene Zuckert, protested the AEC's action in a letter of April 16, 1954, to Rowland Hughes. They wrote:

> The present proposal would create a situation whereby the AEC would be contracting for power not one kilowatt of which would be used in connection with the Commission's production activities.

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The proposal, Smyth and Zuckert added, was "awkward," "unbusinesslike," "incongruous," and loaded with danger for the future. It was, they added, irrelevant to the purposes of the AEC. Therefore, they argued, participation in the plan by AEC would reverse the established policy of limiting the Commission to its own tremendous job.

A third Commissioner, Thomas Murray, broadly shared these views. That left Chairman Strauss in a minority and so he turned to "higher authority" for help. Therefore Hughes enlisted the help of President Eisenhower without, apparently, informing him of the opposition already expressed to the plan. In his memorandum of April 24 Hughes strongly recommended to the President that he intervene on behalf of the scheme. The costs of the Dixon-Yates contract, he hinted, might be a little higher than the TVA's proposed plant. (The difference was $90 million over the life of the contract according to Hughes' own office.) Then, as if to bring the President's blood to a boil and strengthen his resolve to do the right thing, Hughes added:

> It is of course clear that this proposal will be subject to strong political attacks by the proponents of continued use of federal funds to build up TVA power plants and to maintain lower power rates through the special interest and tax advantages enjoyed by TVA. Their line of argument has already been presented by Senator Gore. . . .

Ignoring entirely the criticism to the plan voiced by the three AEC Commissioners, Hughes informed the President:

> Acceptance of this utility offer will be agreeable to the AEC if it is determined by higher authority as Administration policy to obtain the advantages of the use use of private power notwithstanding the additional cost. . . .

Seven weeks later after TVA complaints had brought the Dixon-Yates bid down by $27 million and a second bid by a rival syndicate had been rejected, Hughes laid a new memorandum on the President's desk. It referred to a letter to be sent from Hughes to Strauss informing Strauss that the President was instructing the AEC to sign "a definitive contract" with Dixon and Yates. Hughes added:

> Admiral Strauss is hopeful that this will be a sufficient basis for Messrs. Smyth and Zuckert to support him in completing the contract.

To ensure the President's participation in the scheme Hughes assured the President that Strauss would bear the political load for the plan. He added one more dig at TVA:

> Hearings are scheduled for the very near future in the Congress at which Admiral Strauss and his staff will explain the terms of the proposal prior to actually entering into the contract. These hearings will undoubtedly bring out further orations about the TVA.

Rowland Hughes

Hughes was at least partially right. The contract was close to completion. Yet its terms were withheld from the Congress. The Republican Majority nonetheless suggested it sight unseen by way of a general amendment to the Atomic Energy Act. The "orations about TVA" foreseen and discounted by Hughes followed. But they were not limited to identifiable opponents of the President like Senator Gore. They extended to conservatives as well as New Dealers, businessmen and publishers as well as consumers, who believed that TVA had become a part of the American heritage.

As the protests rose against the Dixon-Yates contract it became necessary for its advocates to set forth in the voice of the President the compelling reasons for favoring Dixon and Yates. The occasion came when Mr. Eisenhower, on September 23, dedicated a federal dam on the Columbia River authorized by his predecessor. There the President outlined in terms of political philosophy his fear of public power. The speech was the President's appraisal of those "advantages of the use of private enterprise notwithstanding additional cost." It was the rationalization for his decision to use Dixon and Yates to weaken TVA.

First the President presented a gloomy picture which, if it portrayed anything, portrayed the Tennessee Valley as he saw it. He declared:

> As federal power expands in a region . . . local enterprise becomes increasingly intimidated and discouraged, even though the needs for energy grow. Thus still more federal intervention is necessary. Such a conversion of local regions into federal satellites poses a threat deadly to our liberties.

It would be hard to create a more distorted picture of the Tennessee Valley today. TVA's tax payments and services have increased up to sixfold the operating expenditures of state agencies that make up the Valley. Its cities and municipalities have thrived on the revenues earned from TVA power. Sixteen hundred factories have been brought to the region since 1929 raising industrial employment in the region by 72 percent as compared with 41 percent in the nation as a whole. And far from being intimidated and discouraged as the President suggests, the private utilities that operate around the valley have been induced by TVA to improve their performance and to strengthen themselves. Thus, speaking of the Chairman of Dixon's subsidiary, the Arkansas Power and Light Company, *Business Week* writes:

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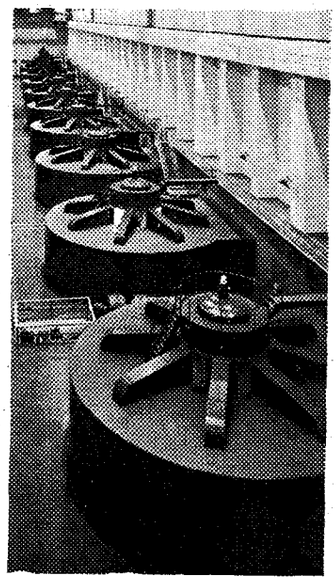
Ham Moses has been afraid of something like an Arkansas TVA for 20 years. He has fought it by pushing rural electrification, by selling power to rural co-operatives cheaper than the government's power systems could, and by building Arkansas.

Speaking at McNary Dam, President Eisenhower developed further his reasons for siding with the private utilities against the TVA. Federal power projects, he held, were wasteful, overbearing, remote from the people. Private utilities in contrast represented local management, local responsibility, "local participation."

Once again the President's generalization bears little relation to the facts. The TVA is bound by the terms of its enabling legislation that can be amended from year to year. It is responsible to the President and subject to control by Congress. It is well integrated with state governments. The distribution of TVA power is entirely in the hands of local management and the 97 municipalities, the 51 rural co-operatives and the two private firms that retail TVA power are all protected by contracts enforceable in the courts. TVA's accounts are open.

Middle South Utilities, in contrast, is a $500 million corporation run from New York City. Of its nine directors, four—two planters, a manufacturer and a banker—live in the South. Faithful to the image presented by President Eisenhower, Middle South's operating subsidiaries boast that they are "investor owned, home managed." The reality of this slogan is illustrated by Stietenroth who told the Senate Subcommittee on Monopoly: "We couldn't call our souls our own." Stietenroth was on weak ground in arguing that Edgar Dixon was acting improperly in ordering huge stock dividends to be paid by the transfer of the Mississippi company's reserves. Actions such as this were the prerogative of the holding company that owned all of the Mississippi corporation's common stock.



James Stietenroth and Senator Kefauver were further in error when during the Senate subcommittee hearings they argued that Dixon's domination of the operating company was a violation of the Holding Company Act. Yet, in puncturing the President's image of local management in the utility industry, it is Stietenroth, not Eisenhower who presents conditions as they exist. Stietenroth, the principal financial officer of a utility company, did not know what his company's liabilities were. On matters of insurance, rates, taxes, engineering advice, purchases, research, accounting, borrowing, personnel and appraisal of power needs the Mississippi company was compelled to follow the instructions of Ebasco, the service corporation of the old Electric Bond and Share Company. Nor could the Mississippi Company shape the nature or cost of the advice it had to take. "How did you determine Ebasco's fees?" asked the Subcommittee counsel, and Stietenroth answered, "We set out a barrel of money and let Ebasco take what they considered to be fair."

High on the platform at McNary Dam, the President continued his attack on public enterprise. He held that it had to be wasteful because "it is of course not difficult to be generous with someone else's money." In contrast he cited the efficiency of capitalism. He ridiculed the notion held by "zealots" that "we poor citizens [need to be] protected against exploitation against what they call the 'predatory exponents' of capitalism."

Do these phrases have any meaning? "Someone else's money" yields four percent on funds invested in the TVA and cheap power is only one of the Authority's many contributions to the region. And whose money is it that the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company and the great banks are planning to risk in the Dixon-Yates plant? All risk is effectively removed by the AEC. All unforeseen losses can be unloaded by the holding company onto the ratepayers of Arkansas and Mississippi if Stietenroth, who read the contract, is right. As for "exploitation"—in Stietenroth's view the consumers of Mississippi pay $2 to $3 million in excess rates for electricity each year. And yet the company's rates are below the national average for private utilities. The Federal Power Commission's analysis shows that "typical monthly bills" for 500 kilowatt hours are $10.18 for the Mississippi Power and Light Company, as against the national average of $10.25. The reason is not regulation, for there is no public utility commission in Mississippi, and the mayors of each city are in no position to complain. The reason is that in the nearby municipality of Aberdeen the comparative bill is $5.10. Aberdeen is served by TVA power. Without that yardstick who knows to what heights private utility rates might climb?

Speaking against the roar of falling water at McNary, President Eisenhower presented a final argument for his Administration's stand. Government means "malignant bureaucracy," he said, and threatens liberty; private enterprise in contrast means freedom.

Can this thesis be employed to justify the Dixon-Yates contract? TVA has supported no radio commentators, censored no newspapers, engaged in no politics to run private manufacturers out of the region. What about the Mississippi Power and Light Company?

For example, there is the company practice of paying $75 to $100 each month to 25 leading lawyers in various

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communities—seven of them in the state capital. "Only on the rarest occasions do they do any work," Stietenroth testified, and when they work they draw added fees.

There is also the story, according to Stietenroth, of how the Mississippi company killed off a struggling rural co-operative by cutting rates and building spite lines in its area, and how when a new election was held to organize a public utility district the company sent 26 canvassers into the area on wages and expense accounts to win support for the company and transport voters to the polls.

There is, lastly, the experience of Stietenroth himself in attempting to tell his story to his own community in Jackson, Mississippi. "The Hedeman-controlled Jackson daily newspapers," he testified, printed his first story. "After that the Iron Curtain, the Wall of Silence, was clamped down in Jackson." Stietenroth added: "The Mississippi Power and Light Company pays substantial money to the Hedeman interests."

All this, of course, is part of the pattern of our democracy. The purpose of his article is not to argue that there is no place in America for Edgar Dixon, Eugene Yates and their companies. It is to suggest that there is a continuing place both for them and for TVA. That is also the view of most citizens in the TVA region. They judge from the record that the men who surround President Eisenhower do not agree. They look on the Dixon-Yates contract as the first move by the Eisenhower Administration to break up the TVA. They believe that not long after the first private plant is built to feed power into the southwest corner of TVA, a second will be built in the northeast corner, a third in the southern border followed by more within the region as McAfee proposed. Thus, they believe, its old enemies will slowly choke the TVA to death. The citizens of the Valley are unimpressed by the President's warnings about the "malignant bureaucracy" that he himself has chosen to head. They believe, and their spokesmen intend to prove before the Congress, the SEC and the courts, that the Dixon-Yates contract is deceptive, wasteful and above all illegal under the terms of the Holding Company Act.

Republican In-Fighting in New Jersey

by Earl Mazo

THERE is bitterness in New Jersey. But practically all of it is within the Republican Party. In the fight for Republican Robert C. Hendrickson's Senate seat, the Democratic nominee Charles R. Howell, favored to win, is only of the most casual and incidental interest.

The bitterness is over the candidacy of Clifford P. Case, a five-term Representative who won the Republican nomination without opposition last April after White House pressure forced out Senator Hendrickson. Since then, ultraconservative and McCarthy-following Republican groups have been nipping at Case's heels and leaping for his political throat, their fangs poisoned with charges that he is "too liberal," "no Republican," "soft on Reds," "an ADA-left-winger" and even "Stalin's choice for Senate."

At first these groups sought to have Case replaced as the Republican candidate by "someone like Fred Hartley," co-author of the Taft-Hartley Act. When Case allowed the candidate-withdrawal deadline to pass without heeding the demands of his detractors, they launched an "informal" write-in campaign for Hartley, which may attract many Republican votes at a time when the party candidate can hardly spare one.

Howell, Case's Democratic opponent, whose mild-mannered campaign is going almost unnoticed because of the more newsworthy Republican fight, has been a Congressman for six years and is considered one of New Jersey's most able and conscientious Representatives in Washington. If he wins, he will be the first Democrat sent to the Senate by New Jersey voters since the Roosevelt landslide of 1936, and only the fourth in this century.

While Case's notable record as a vote-getter caused him to be considered a sure winner last March, the Princeton Research Service, which has never yet been wrong on a New Jersey forecast, found that four weeks before the election, Howell was ahead by 3.5 percent. Such a thin margin could alter either way, of course, November 2.

One of the stranger features of the Case-Howell race is that their Congressional records are such that both are liked and hated by the same elements. Thus extremist Republicans, who detest Case, also detest Howell and publicly wish for a way to destroy both.

The anti-Case drive was started in April by James A. Selvage, a public-relations executive whose conservatism dates to his close association with President Herbert Hoover. Formerly public-relations director of the National Association of Manufacturers and the Republican

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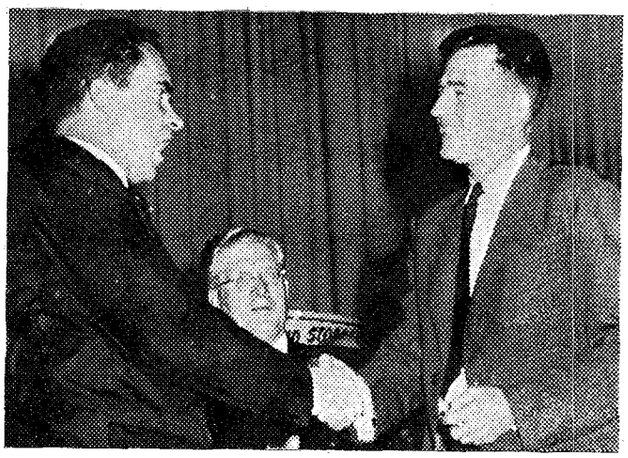

Nixon and Case

National Committee, Selvage began with a typewriter, a mimeograph machine and many three-cent stamps which he used liberally to circulate a leaflet "proving" that Case was "NO Republican" because his record had been extolled by the CIO, AFL and the ADA. Real impetus was added in July when Case issued a long, carefully worded statement calling McCarthy a "divisive force" and pledging, if elected, to vote not only to prevent the Wisconsin Senator from heading investigating committees, but also from gaining membership on any of them.

So the columnists and editorialists of the Hearst newspapers, the *New York Daily News* and the *New York Daily Mirror* took up the anti-Case campaign. Fulton Lewis Jr. devoted nightly broadcasts to uncomplimentary comment on the New Jersey Republican, and from California came a mysterious circular listing Case as an "enemy to watch." The drive appeared disorganized, but it was so vehement that letters of alarm from otherwise loyal Republicans poured into national and state Republican headquarters.

Dr. Samuel M. Josephson, a New York physician, crossed the Hudson to join the fight. He distributed leaflets describing Case as "Stalin's choice for Senator" and "a paid agent of the philanthropic foundation trust." The doctor had a following left over from his work in 1952 as vice-president of the "National Committee to Expose the Pro-Soviet Forces Behind Eisenhower" and from the notoriety he gained by accusing General Eisenhower at a press conference of being associated with Alger Hiss.

A group known as the "Englewood Anti-Communist League, Inc.," made its initial sortie at the opening of Case's headquarters. National Republican Chairman Leonard W. Hall was principal speaker. Members of the League mingled with Case supporters asking them whether they were "Communists or Americans," and distributing a long, pink leaflet which opened thus:

"Mr. Case! You are the New Jersey Republican nominee for Senate. A burning question, uppermost in the minds of the majority of Republicans, is will you if elected truly represent them or will you represent the Communists and their fellow-travelers who apparently are also supporting you?"

The whole business reached a climax late in September at a luncheon of "Pro America, Inc.," where Hartley stripped away the "grass-roots" façade of the movement and made clear that it was a prelude to the coming fight for control of the 1956 Republican National Convention.

State Republican chairman Samuel L. Bodine, meanwhile, issued a long denial of the Republican charges against Case. And the Case campaign began to lose its appeal to the independent voters: every effort was directed to proving that the candidate "IS a Republican," and that "a vote for Case is a vote for Eisenhower."

Former Gov. Walter E. Edge, elder statesman of the party, attacked the Case attackers as "party wreckers." Case called his detractors "extreme reactionaries," embittered because they were "unable to make any headway at Washington with their Victorian Age approach to present-day problems." Vice President Nixon toured the state for a day-and-a-half, insisting that Case was as much an anti-Communist as he was, and promising to come to New Jersey again on election eve. Republicans who attacked Case or refused to contribute to his campaign, said Nixon, were "plain stupid."

Sen. Everett Dirksen (Ill.), Sen. William Knowland (Cal.) and Treasury Secretary George Humphrey were scheduled as speakers, and Case strategists began to wonder if all this would not do their candidate more harm than good among the independents and those Democrats who have been among his supporters.

Meanwhile, the Democrats happily accepted the windfall, complained that their candidate ought to get more attention, and took a few, hesitant pokes at the Republican goings-on. "I hesitate to interfere in someone else's family quarrel," Howell added, "but it is hard to remain silent when I hear Republicans saying things about one another which I have never dreamed of saying about my opponent."

CASE, a strong character whose always-calm appearance masks an inner turmoil sometimes expressed eloquently (as in his anti-McCarthy statement), scoffs at those who think his campaign is doomed. The anti-Case movement, he insists, insures his election because "it emphasizes what I am and what I am not far better than I could." The commotion also makes news, he points out—*Case* news, and thus thousands who know about him, including Democrats, can't even name his Democratic opponent.

He intends "in the last weeks" to catch up on the "unfinished business" of explaining where he stands on important issues. One of these is the contention that Howell's election might turn the Senate to Democratic control. And since Democrats would be intent on electing a President two years hence, Case insists, they would "tie the hands" of President Eisenhower and cause confusion during the next two crucial years.

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Howell retorts that President Eisenhower gets more support from Democrats "when he is right," than from Republicans. But Case's principal campaign theme is likely to continue to be that the New Jersey election is a "plebiscite" on the Eisenhower Administration. And the campaign will continue to be dominated by a photograph *not* of the scholarly and engaging candidate, himself, but the one of Case shaking hands with the President over a caption quoting General Eisenhower as saying, "In all my dealings with Clifford Case, I have found him to be a very splendid American and dedicated to public service."

That the Democrats are troubled by this approach is evident in Howell's insistence that he "compiled a box score" in support of Eisenhower better than that of Case.

Obviously, there has not yet been a real clash on major issues. Both candidates are against McCarthy and both are internationalists. On domestic affairs, Case has declared himself "1,000 percent" for the Eisenhower program, and Howell has attacked the new tax law, various "giveaways," and has appealed for "help" for the state's 135,000 unemployed and the additional thousands whose paychecks have been cut by short work weeks. Whether many voters are more aware of these issues because Howell has mentioned them is problematical.

The two candidates observed their 50th birthdays a week apart in April. Both are tall, thin, seldom ruffled men of deep liberal convictions and firm political philosphies. They respect and have high personal regard for each other. Each has been the most outstanding vote-getter in his district.

Howell turned a part-rural, part-industrial Republican district Democratic in 1948, and has been re-elected ever since by increasingly large majorities. In 1952 Case had the support of labor organizations, independents and many Democrats. He was bitterly opposed by a group known as "Republicans Against Case." He won re-election in his normally Republican, part-suburban, part-industrial district by a record 55,000-vote margin.

Case, an attorney, resigned from Congress last August to become president of the Fund for the Republic, a Ford Foundation financed agency dedicated to promoting civil liberties. He resigned from this $40,000-a-year position last Spring to run for Senator partly at the insistence of prominent figures in the Eisenhower Administration and friends of the President.

HOWELL won his party's nomination without opposition after Gov. Robert D. Meyner insisted that he run. Howell is an insurance executive whose folksy manner has earned him the nickname "Farmer Jones." He introduced the first fair employment legislation in the New Jersey Legislature and has been for many years a conscientious advocate of New Deal-Fair Deal measures. In the present campaign he has the support of most labor organizations and the advantage of being the candidate of the Meyner administration which uncovered the money-juggling activities of former Republican Gov. Harold G. Hoffman—New Jersey's worst political scandal.

Although Case is one of the few ranking New Jersey Republicans not even remotely linked to any phase of this scandal, his candidacy has been injured by it, especially since it followed other disclosures of serious Republican corruption in New Jersey.

The Republican nominee has the support of practically every New Jersey newspaper, and most of the metropolitan dailies in New York and Philadelphia. *Time* and *Life* magazines have given him generous displays; and he benefited by a dramatically effective Edward R. Murrow "See It Now" television show. Other television and radio programs as well as national publications have treated him favorably.

The most wildly condemned organization in the campaign has been the Americans for Democratic Action; in New Jersey, not a significant political force.

Howell

On the basis of political history, Case should win the election easily. Of the three Democrats elected to the Senate in New Jersey since the 1890s, one benefited by the Presidential sweep of New Jersey's Woodrow Wilson four decades ago, another won on the prohibition issue, and the third won in the 1936 Roosevelt landslide. The state has been Republican for more than 60 years; it has given its electoral votes to only five Democratic Presidential candidates in this century (once to Wilson and four times to Franklin D. Roosevelt); only eight of the last 18 governors have been Democrats, and most of them won because Frank Hague, the former Democratic state boss, controlled the maneuvers; the legislature has been Republican for 40 years; and Republicans control practically all county courthouses and even the city halls of some large cities. In 1952, President Eisenhower took the state with a 360,000-vote plurality, and Sen. H. Alexander Smith, a Republican, was re-elected by a 270,000-vote margin. Although Governor Meyner's victory last year was impressive, the Republicans again won both Houses of the legislature by overwhelming margins.

But the scandals have hurt the Republicans.

The stakes in the Case-Howell race go beyond the question of one more Republican or Democrat in the Senate when the 84th Congress organizes in January. If Case loses, the Republican Party in New Jersey is in for a long period of internal strife and decline. By the same token, Howell's election would add immeasurably not only to the New Jersey Democratic Party's strength, but also to the prestige of Governor Meyner, who has become a figure to be contended with at the next national convention.

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What Is Bevan's Future?

by Iain Colquhoun

THE BRITISH Labour Party, having just touched earth again at its yearly conference in Scarborough, is perhaps more vigorous just now than at any other time these last 12 months. But, like the bearded lady of the fair ground, it wears an ambiguous appearance. The Gallup Polls of the last few months have been showing small majorities in favor of Labour. Yet, just as you never meet a man who has actually been polled by Gallup, it seems quite impossible to find anybody who really believes that Labour would win an election if it came within the next few months.

Bevan

The reasons for doubt about Labour's prospects are obvious enough, though they may not, in fact, turn out to be very good ones. They lie in the apparent disarray exhibited at Scarborough.

But things at Scarborough were not nearly so bad as they looked. Nothing makes a more alarming noise than a safety valve blowing off under a good healthy head of steam. Party delegates, having had very few outlets throughout the year, expect to let themselves go at the party conference and they always do. This was Aneurin Bevan's position *in excelsis*. While he remained on the Party Executive he had to keep his differences to himself in public. After he had been defeated by Hugh Gaitskell for the post of Treasurer and had thereby lost his Executive seat, it would have been surprising, in fact it would have been sinister, if he had not sounded off violently at the first opportunity.

By general agreement the highlights of the proceedings at Scarborough were the Bevanite declaration of war, the debate on the defense treaty for Southeast Asia and the debate on German rearmament. It was signficant that Mr. Bevan and his friends failed to carry the day, though by quite a small majority, on the SEATO vote. They had been confident that here they could beat the Executive by putting the party on record against any Far East defense organization which did not have the blessing of Communist China.

Much the same happened about German rearmament. After the SEATO vote it was really a little unnecessary for Mr. Attlee to open the German debate with a warning against emotionalism. Not that the discussion was ever in any danger of being conducted on an arid intellectual level. All the arguments for and against German rearmament having been used already *ad infinitum,* most of the delegates confined themselves to pronouncing anathema or blessing with all the warmth of expression which usually accompany such canonical exercises. When R. W. Casasola, of the Foundry Workers Union, who proposed the anti-rearmament resolution, had finished speaking he got the kind of applause which is usually reserved for an American convention greeting the Presidential candidate who is obviously going to win the nomination.

Mr. Desmond Donnelly, MP for Pembroke, managed to whip up quite as much furore on the other side. Not so long ago Mr. Donnelly was strongly opposed to giving arms to Germans. Then he went for a trip through Soviet Poland. What he saw there made him change his mind, and with all the fervor of a recent convert he attacked at the conference not only the Bevanite viewpoint, but the Bevanite leader. "Some people," he cried, pointing an accusing finger at Mr. Bevan sitting gagged on the platform, "will bear a heavy responsibility before history," if the Germans end up by having all the arms and no controls.

AT THIS sally the conference stamped its feet and howled in indignation. Mr. Donnelly insisted on his rights of free speech. Mr. Bevan, whose blood pressure must have been rising dangerously, forgot about the gag and told Mr. Donnelly to shut up. At this Arthur Deakin entered the fray in all his might, majesty, dominion and power. "You shut up," he said to Mr. Bevan. "Bully," came back the inevitable response.

Such was the reaction to Clement Attlee's appeal for calm and reasonable judgments during the debate. But when it came to voting, things were different. Herbert Morrison made one of the best speeches of his career. It was reasoned and reasonable, but very human, too. Perhaps he swayed the meeting. Perhaps the issue was already settled, but when the vote was taken, the resolution against German rearmament was defeated.

The vote was a touch-and-go affair. The majority for the Executive was only 248,000 on a card vote of 6,292,000. The small woodworkers' union, having only 129,000 votes, changed its mind almost at the last moment and decided to support the Executive. If it had held by

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its earlier decision against German rearmament, the platform would have been defeated by 10,000 votes.

It was, then, by a tiny margin that the Labour Party preserved for its leaders some flexibility in their approach to the second biggest problem of foreign affairs. Some people see in this evidence that the party is far too deeply split to make an alternative government for Britain in the foreseeable future. But it is easy to be misled into making deductions of this sort. The emotions, the personalities and even the voting on the German question cannot be projected into other fields of party activity. For one thing the issue of German rearmament will have been settled before Labour comes to power again, perhaps even before it holds another conference. Then again, the coalition which supported Bevanism on Germany would not rally to the same flag in any other cause. In fact, its breakup was announced at Scarborough on the same day as the German debate when Mr. Gaitskell defeated Mr. Bevan roundly for party Treasurer.

MR. BEVAN has now let it be known that he will seek power where he thinks it lies, that is, outside the official party hierarchy. This is generally assumed to mean that he thinks his personal position strong enough within the constituency Labour parties, and now wants freedom to storm the trade union movement, which has been sternly anti-Bevanite to date. Mr. Bevan already has footholds within the unions, and some say that his scathing attack on the miners' president, Ernest Jones, was a calculated effort to separate the mine workers from their leaders. Conceivably, this might work, but it really is unlikely. British miners often say the most frightful things about their leaders, and send them all sorts of threatening messages. But when anyone else tries to do the same, they close up in a solid phalanx to protect their own. Whether they regard Mr. Bevan as one of their own or not is still an open question. He was a miner a long, long time ago and has let no one forget it ever since. But he has not in his political career displayed very much of that staunch, unswerving personal loyalty to his friends on which the British Labour movement, and the miners in particular, place so much value.

Mr. Bevan is a strange, but not unpredictable creature. Some, who claim to see in him deep sincerity behind all the fireworks, believe that he could be a great statesman if only he would forget his personal hatreds. Others are of the opinion that if Mr. Bevan were stripped of his hatreds there would be nothing left. It has often seemed that Mr. Bevan's Socialism springs not so much from his love for all men as from his hearty dislike of a few, and it is apparently impossible for him to contain the cauldron of his emotions. It constantly boils over and splashes searing drops of acid on his colleagues.

Nor is it at all certain that Mr. Bevan is looking for power where in fact it lies. He has ceded his place on the Executive to a very formidable opponent. It is highly probable that Hugh Gaitskell, and not Aneurin Bevan, is Labour's up and coming man, and this is true quite apart from personalities. There are great weaknesses in Bevan's political position as well as in his character. Not the least of these is that it is the Bevanites who are the reactionaries and the moderate leaders of the party who reveal progressive minds.

But Labour thinking has hardly advanced at all in the last four or five years. The conference at Scarborough concentrated to an unprecedented degree on foreign affairs. This was partly because the international issues were grave, dramatic and pressing. The Nine Power Conference was meeting in London as the Labour delegates gathered in Scarborough. But the unhappy truth is also that on the great domestic problems of the moment in the United Kingdom, Labour has not got very much to say. The education debate at the conference, which is usually something to look forward to, was never reached at all. The high cost of living was passed over in the same perfunctory manner. And the issue of conscription, which normally stirs Labour to the bottom of its heart, was referred to the Executive with hardly a discussion and without a vote.

In a sense all this was bad politics. Every political indicator in Britain today says that it is dissatisfaction with domestic issues like the cost of living, pensions and rents that are giving Labour its current electoral lead. Good electioneering would have concentrated on the home front and put all the party's best propositions in this window.

THOSE who claim to be away ahead on domestic policy, the Bevanites, are in fact clamoring to lead a retreat into positions prepared in 1945. Their battle cries are raised on behalf of more nationalization, a return to food subsidies, more soaking of the rich and an end to all Health Service charges. It is, in fact, the old, old formula—promise something for nothing and the votes will roll in. But, of course, the votes that will roll on this bandwagon are simply the same old votes—the ones that are going for Labour anyway, come hell or high water. Nothing in this program is going to tempt the floating votes—the ones that in Britain today decide who shall have a working majority in Parliament. The leaders of the Labour Movement know all this quite well. So do the majority of the constituency rank and file and most of the trade unionists. Bevanism might conceivably gain ground within the Labour Party, but it will not help the party back to power.

This knowledge is not, indeed, a substitute for a political program, but it is some guarantee against looking for a program in the wrong direction. Until the British Labour Party finds a domestic policy more dynamic, more practical and with more direct application to the manifest difficulties that people have to cope with than is contained in its last printed program, "Challenge to Britain," the Labour Party is not going to govern Britain, whatever the Gallup Polls may say.

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BOOKS & COMMENT

Personalism: A New School of Fiction

by Malcolm Cowley

TWO MEN are spending the night in a police station on Division Street, in the Polish quarter of Chicago. They aren't sure why they have been arrested, but they work for Zero Schwiefka, who runs a gambling house, and they guess that he had tried to get out of paying his weekly tribute to Police Sergeant Kvorka.

One of the men is Francis Macjinek, alias Frankie Machine, who is a wizard with cards but can't do anything with people, including himself. Frankie has two great sorrows: that his wife Sophie is a psychotic invalid and that he can't stop taking morphine—"can't get the monkey off my back." His one devoted henchman is the other prisoner, Sparrow Saltskin, whose trade is steering clients into the gambling house, when he isn't stealing dogs or committing other forms of petty larceny. Sparrow is "a little off-balanced," as he likes to say, "but oney on one side. So don't try off-steerin' me, you might be tryin' my good-balanced side."

In the morning a roach falls into the slop bucket in their cell. It reminds Frankie of his own fate and he starts to rescue it, but then he changes his mind. "You ain't gettin' out till I get out," he says. Zero Schwiefka posts bail for his two employees. Climbing the stairs to freedom, Frankie turns back to take the roach out of the bucket, but finds that it has drowned.

The roach is described in the first episode of Nelson Algren's novel, *The Man with the Golden Arm*. Obviously it is the familiar animal symbol that sets the tone of so many naturalistic novels. One remembers the land turtle in *The Grapes of Wrath*, crawling obstinately to no destination, just as the Joad family would crawl westward on the highway. One remembers the jackrabbit hunt in *The Octopus*—soon the ranchers themselves would be hunted down like rabbits—and one remembers the cornered rat that Bigger Thomas killed in the first chapter of *Native Son*, as Bigger himself would be killed at the end of the story. This time, however, the symbol is a mixture of the grotesque and the absurd, with a hint that the author feels a wry affection for his characters and even for the roach. It leads us to expect that *The Man with the Golden Arm* will be a little different from the usual type of naturalistic novel.

NATURALISM in the proper sense—not the loose sense in which critics have been using the word—is a literary method based on the doctrine that men and women, as part of nature, are completely subject to natural laws, conditions and forces. The forces are magnified and the persons minimized. Zola invented the method and he said, underlying the phrase, *"I subject men and women to things."* Dreiser often described his characters as "pawns on a chessboard"; he also liked to say that they were "victims of forces beyond their control." The central character of a naturalistic novel is a victim rather than a hero; he is "the man to whom things happen," in Wyndham Lewis' phrase, and he lacks the power of deliberate choice.

Nelson Algren's story seems to fall into the familiar naturalistic pattern. His hero-victim, Frankie Machine, is an orphan who never had a chance and had never been taught a trade except dealing cards. Sophie had forced him to marry her by pretending to be pregnant. In the Army he had been severely wounded and had been given morphine to deaden the pain until he learned to steal the drug when the doctors stopped prescribing it. Back in Chicago he had smashed a second-hand car when Sophie and he were drunk, and Sophie, in her subconscious desire to retain his affection, had convinced herself that she was hopelessly crippled. Now the pattern of victimization will be traced to the end. Frankie will be badgered into killing a dope peddler; he will be hunted by the police, while Sophie is taken to the county asylum; he will be hidden for a time by a strip teaser who loves him (she is another victim); then at last he will be cornered in a cheap hotel and driven to commit suicide; all his life will be written in the passive voice.

Most of the minor characters are also driven and deformed by conditions beyond their power to change, as in every naturalistic novel since Zola, but there is something different in the author's approach to the story. He seems to be turning the naturalistic method upside down. Instead of reapeating that irresistible forces are shaping the lives of these people, he takes the forces for granted. What he emphasizes is the other side of the picture, the rebellions and lies and laughter by means of which they retain, even the most repulsive of them, some remnants of human pride.

The most repulsive of all the characters is Piggy-O, the blind dope peddler, who hates more fortunate people and hasn't bathed since he lost his sight, because he enjoys the idea that he is inflicting his smell on mankind. Like the others he drinks in the Tug & Maul Bar, but Anton the Owner makes him stand at the end of the bar, next to the men's toilet, so that the smell of disinfectant will deaden the smell of Piggy. Anton asks him why he hasn't enough pride to bathe, and Piggy-O answers, "I got *my* kind of pride, 'n you got yours—I'm proud of being how *I* am too."

That pride in being themselves makes the characters something more than the specimens they would be in purely naturalistic novels. Instead of being a clinical study in degradation, the book comes close to being a poem about degradation, written in sometimes lyrical prose. Instead of leaving us with a a feeling of defeat, it celebrates the unconquered personality and humor in the lowest of men: hustlers, junkies, stoolies, dips, stewbums, "the Republic's crummiest lushes . . . even the most maimed wreck of them all," the author says, "held, like a pennant in that drifting light, some frayed remnant of laughter from unfrayed years."

The Invisible Man, by Ralph Ellison, is another novel that starts with social conditions and ends as a defense of the separate personality. Its unnamed hero, who tells his own story, has been expelled from a Southern Negro college

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for no fault of his own. Still eager to succeed, he finds work in a white-paint factory on Long Island and is injured through the malice of another Negro. In the factory hospital he is given electric-shock treatments because the doctors want a subject for experiment. The scene shifts to Harlem, where the hero is recruited by the Communists and, on revealing a talent for public speaking, is made their district leader. Soon the Communists abandon and betray him; they have changed their policy and decided to foment a race riot by supporting a group of Negro fanatics. In the midst of the riot he is pursued by the fanatics and narrowly escapes being lynched.

Once again the hero has been a victim whose story can be told in the passive voice, but *The Invisible Man* is far from being a naturalistic novel. The technique is closer to that of the expressionists: every scene is exaggerated, even caricatured, in order to convey what the novelist thinks is the essential truth about it. Almost every act has a symbolic value, and many of the scenes are too patly symbolic—like the picture of black men working in a sub-basement to make a black liquid that, when carried upstairs into the sunlight, will turn paint dazzlingly white.

At the end of the novel even the plot ceases to be naturalistic and becomes a sort of parable. The hero falls through a manhole into a coal cellar and thus escapes from the black mob that is trying to lynch him. After finding an unused basement room, he lives there alone and meditates on his past life. He decides that everybody has regarded him simply as a material, a natural resource to be used. Nobody has ever seen him as a person; he has been the invisible man. For all the resentment he feels against the white race, he realizes that his dilemma is not merely that of a Negro; it is the dilemma of all men in a mechanized civilization. "Who knows," he says to the presumably white reader at the end of the novel, "but that, on the lower frequencies, I speak for you?"

Coming

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"LINCOLN"

by Herbert Croly

STILL another novel—*The Adventures of Augie March*, by Saul Bellow—leads by a more roundabout path to a somewhat similar conclusion. This time the background is Chicago in the depression years. The hero is a Jewish boy who, at the beginning of the story, is living with his meek, half-blind mother and his two brothers. The youngest, Georgie, is feeble-minded and the father is a shiftless failure who has deserted the family. At present the Marches are miserably poor, but this isn't the sort of novel that will pursue them to the point where their lives are crushed out by conditions and forces.

Simon, the oldest brother, has an inner force that is capable of surmounting conditions. He is determined to get rich, he makes a brilliant marriage, and at the end of the book he is an overbearing, pot-bellied, unhappy man of affairs. Augie March is less certain of what he wants to do. He is bright, engaging, uncommitted, so that dozens of persons want to pick a career for him, enlist him in their schemes, adopt him as a son, or take him for a lover—and Augie always consents in the beginning, but there is something stubborn in him that makes him follow his own path even though he isn't certain where it goes. Always he remains uncommitted; always he breaks away and is ready to start a new adventure.

The adventures, interesting as they are in themselves, are chiefly occasions for introducing new characters. Each of these has a separate life, and many have something more than that, a sort of demonic power. Among others there is Anna Coblin, who appears at the beginning of the book. "As she had great size and terrific energy of constitution," Augie says of her, "she produced all kinds of excesses. Even physical ones: moles, blebs, hairs, bumps on her forehead, huge concentrations on her neck; she had spiraling reddish hair springing with no negligible beauty and definiteness from her scalp." Most of Bellow's Chicago characters are like that: excessive, but with definite features of no negligible beauty.

Augie, who tells their stories, has a feeling for the integrity of each separate person; he is ready to love and admire them all, so long as each embodies a different pattern or principle of life. His own development from one episode to another is simply toward a greater awareness of his own nature. "I have always tried to become what I am," he tells a wise old rascal named Mintouchian, whom he also loves and admires. At the end of the book Augie is living in Paris and acting as Mintouchian's agent in black-market deals. He adores his wife, but she is getting ready to deceive him with a French aristocrat, and he has had to relinquish his dream of starting a foster home in which to educate many children. But he is happy enough simply observing persons in their endless variety. "Why," he says at last, "I am a sort of Columbus of those near-at-hand and believe you can come to them in this immediate *terra incognita* that spreads out in every gaze."

All three of these novels have "big" subjects of the types that are usually treated in naturalistic fiction. All three are concerned with social forces, but they don't leave us with the impression that the forces are everything, or that the characters are "nothings, mere animalculae," as Frank Norris called them at the end of *The Octopus*. A few other novelists have been writing in much the same spirit; I might mention Herbert Gold (*Birth of a Hero* and *The Prospect Before Us*) and Harvey Swados (*Out Went the Candle*). I suspect that these novels and others belong to a new category of postwar fiction, not a large category as yet, but perhaps important for the future.

IS THERE a name for this tendency or group of school? The name may be suggested in Swados' first novel, not yet published, which I read in manuscript. At one point the hero, on a visit to Pompeii, is accosted by a little boy selling filthy postcards. He buys all the cards and destroys them. "There are times," he explains, "when you have to do things you know are useless. . . . It isn't just conscience-salving. It's a way of proving to yourself that you're still a person. And that's something you have to prove over and over."

Since all the novelists end by affirming the value of separate persons in conflict with social forces, I have thought of calling them personalists. The name, of course, has been used in other connections, but it has the present advantage of applying to the different styles in which the novels are written as well as to the doctrine they all imply.

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Each of the novelists seems to believe that the author himself should be a personality instead of a recording instrument, and therefore he keeps trying to find a personal approach and a personal manner of writing.

The effort is sometimes carried too far and all the novels have faults that are easy to discern. Algren, for example, keeps falling into a burlesque of himself, Ellison sacrifices his sense of reality to his passion for symbols, and Bellow, though he writes with more authority than the others, still has trouble holding his long book together and making it more than a series of separate adventures. These faults, however, are the price each of them pays for taking risks that other novelists of the postwar era have been a little too willing to avoid. If there is a single tendency that will mark the fiction of the era, perhaps the personalists are suggesting what it will be.

A Great Writer's Evolution

by Irving Howe

REGARDED in her own time as one of the greatest English novelists, George Eliot came to suffer a strange loss of critical esteem during the earlier decades of our century. Didactic, moralizing, heavy-handed — these were among the standard accusations against her books. Today this estimate of our elders seems incredible, and Lord David Cecil's remark that he shrank from reading her novels, their very titles sounding "like the names in a graveyard," strikes one as a prize critical boner. (Besides, names in graveyards sound exactly like those of living people.)

The George Eliot Letters, volumes I-III, edited by Gordon S. Haight (Yale; $20).

Among serious critics George Eliot is again honored as a master of the novel, partly because recent shifts in intellectual climate have made her seem close to us and partly because one or two critics, notably F. R. Leavis, have championed her work and taught us to appreciate its meanings. *Middlemarch*, it no longer takes boldness to say, is probably the greatest novel written by anyone born in England; *Daniel Deronda*, *Felix Holt* and *The Mill on the Floss* are works of high distinction. And George Eliot herself has become for many of us a kind of literary heroine, representing the highest intellectual seriousness, the finest literary commitment and purity. We admire her for very great achievements, but even more, for a capacity to unite harmoniously the intellectual and creative sides of her personality, the writer who struggled with every leading idea of her time and the writer who brought to the English countryside a sweetness of affection it had seldom known before. And if ever it is recognized that *Middlemarch* is also one of the wittiest books in English, her triumph will be complete.

Except perhaps for Dr. Leavis' excellent study, George Eliot has received no tribute in our time equal to that now paid her by the publication of three immense and expensive volumes of her letters, totalling 1500 pages, and two-thirds of them in print for the first time. Three more volumes are to come, and when the project is completed, it will surely rank as one of the most significant among modern achievements in literary scholarship. Professor Haight has spent 20 years collecting and editing these letters; the result, unlike a good deal of literary scholarship in America, justifies the labor. For these volumes are important not merely to students of literature but to anyone interested in the development of nineteenth century English intellectual life—which is also to say, our own intellectual life.

In any obvious sense George Eliot was not a great letter writer. One seldom finds in her letters that fabulous brilliance of phrase which makes Keats' letters so unforgettable, nor the psychological melodrama of Cowper's, nor the historical dramatics of Byron's. She wrote with no eye to publication or posterity: she wrote to her friends. In the main her letters are impersonal, though we do get a few glimpses of her neurotic dispositions, her insatiable need for reassurance (she wryly chastises "that traitor within, the love of human praise"), her prostrating migraines and, more happily, the enviable happiness of her marriage with G. H. Lewes. Once we move past the sticky—yet oddly impressive, as any strong faith is impressive—young evangelist of 19 who does not hesitate to compare herself with St. Paul, the writing becomes firm and supple, excellent in a wholly unliterary way: these are letters, not compositions. And precisely for this reason they provide us with an unexcelled portrait of the intellectual life of a century ago, which in its tones and tensions, if not in the specific problems that agitated it, bears an astonishing resemblance to our own time.

The disintegration of orthodox Christian belief as the unquestioned heritage of educated Englishmen had reached a point of crisis during Eliot's youth. The assaults of the "higher criticism," rudimentary by comparison with the German but still damaging enough; the corrosions of agnosticism, which as Engels remarks was often in England but a timid form of atheism; the lures and rivalries of science; the thrusting weight of a new industrial society—all these, and far more, were slowly grinding down and crushing the very bones of religious orthodoxy. For Eliot, nonetheless, it was a very great advantage to have been raised in an atmosphere of evangelical piety, for it gave her the moral courage to engage in a conscientious and fully-considered repudiation.

Coming under the influence of the Brays and the Hennells, two families of advanced religious and social views, her mind began to ferment with bold heterodox opinions, just as her style grew more fluid, precise and humane. There is a remarkable, previously unpublished letter which she wrote at 23 to her father, trying to explain why she would no longer go to church. Even those to whom her struggles of belief involve matters by now settled or irrelevant must feel a tremor of historical recognition as they read her sentence about the Scriptures: "I regard these writings as histories consisting of mingled truth and fictions. . . . " It is a sentence which, in its numerous mutations, is to rock the century. And the firmness with which she announces her break from the church, when compared with the anguished self-torment of another letter to

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"IBSEN, THE ROMANTIC"

by E. M. Forster

a father, the letter by Kafka—this is the stuff of high intellectual drama.

It is customary these days to yearn for the advantages a writer gains when he can receive in full-force and at the level of implicit communication the traditional values and beliefs of his forebears; but there may be at least as great advantage for a writer to mature at a time when a faith has begun to decay yet is still a powerful shaper of the collective imagination. For a struggle against a revered faith requires a kind of *critical piety*, a capacity to face its claims, as to acknowledge its deficiencies, with the fullest resources of consciousness; and it is precisely this balance of acceptance and rejection, loyalty and criticism, which makes George Eliot's work so valuable. As a girl she writes a sentence that seems a key to her intellectual biography: "I was considerably shaken by the impression that religion was not a requisite to moral excellence." This "impression" once registered, everything else, the whole plunge into modern skepticism, inevitably follows.

It is too well known to need further description here. The letters themselves do it with unparalleled detail and richness: the pious little missy, stiff as a board, becomes a sharp, almost terrifying intellectual, revelling in polemics and disputes, meeting on equal terms Herbert Spencer, Harriet Martineau and Charles Dickens, sending the editor of the *Westminster Review* a deserved rebuke for his violation of the laws of syntax, translating Strauss, Feuerbach and Spinoza, and writing articles so thoughtful and well-grounded that they could still be profitably reprinted. The common image of George Eliot as a rather forbidding blue-stocking is sheer misconception, largely the result of the carefully twisted biography written by her second husband, John Cross. Actually the George Eliot of these earlier letters is a woman of almost bewildering emotional readiness, waiting to be impressed, like the heroine of *Middlemarch*, by men of intellect; she is all eager warmth and receptivity, hungering for affection and struggling to contain her pride; and she is a woman of rare wit, able to say of her meeting with Strauss, "my deficient German prevented us from learning more of each other than our exteriors which in the case of both would have been better left to imagination." Finally, she is a woman of great personal power and massive integrity, who writes that great sentence in defense of her "irregular union" (as the literary historians call it) with G. H. Lewes, a sentence which seems, in its powerful social wit, to be a germ of the style of *Middlemarch*:

> Light and easily broken ties are what I neither desire theoretically nor could live for practically. Women who are satisfied with such ties do *not* act as I have done—they obtain what they desire and are still invited to dinner.

The general impression one gains of her intellectual development is quite close to the careful summary provided by Basil Willey in his *Nineteenth Century Studies*—except in one important respect. Willey treats her shift from evangelical Christianity to a softened form of the "religion of humanity" in purely religious terms, which seems to me not so much mistaken as one-sided. He fails to recognize that in the nineteenth century social and political issues were often fought out in the guise of theological controversy, and one does not therefore get from his study a sufficient sense of the George Eliot—not the major George Eliot, but an important one nonetheless—who said that it was worth learning French simply to read Rousseau's *Confessions* or who wrote in 1848 a letter in which she analyzes the French Revolution in terms that recall both Stendhal's letters about the revolution of 1830 and Marx's little book *Class Struggle in France*. She speaks of her "sanscullotish" sympathies, she summons the picture of "the men of the barricade bowing to the image of Christ 'who first taught fraternity to men'," she declares that "our decayed monarchs should be pensioned off: we should have a hospital for them, or a sort of Zoological Garden, where these worn-out humbugs may be preserved." Then she proceeds to an extremely shrewd analysis of the differences between the French and the English workers, and a little later she identifies herself with those who have "a presentiment, a yearning, or a clear vision of the time when this miserable reign of Mammon shall end . . . I feel that society is training men and women for hell." None of this, of course, is to deny the deeply conservative bent of her temperament; it is only to emphasize the conflicting bent of her opinions.

The third volume of the letters takes us to the point where Eliot, after orgies of self-doubt, becomes a writer of proven success, though her best work is still before her. One could quote for pages many of the remarkable passages that show the steady growth of her mind and the steady enlargement of her sympathies. But I can mention only a few. Throughout the letters she keeps returning to her views on literature, in which she makes the kinds of discriminations that modern criticism labors to impress. She refused to tell her publisher the story of *Adam Bede* before he saw the manuscript, "on the ground that I would not have it judged apart from my *treatment*, which alone determines the moral quality of art"—a view perhaps even more extreme than most "New Critics" have dared to suggest. She withdraws from ideological contention ("opinions are a poor cement between human souls") and refines her sense of the "religion of the heart," which is the enemy of all dogma and revelation. And at the age of 41 she writes the great passage which is the negative side of her commitment to the life of "sympathy," the passage that ends, "The highest 'calling and election' is to do *without opium* and live through all our pain with conscious, clear-eyed endurance."

But my space runs out and rather than further to specify the qualities of these volumes, let me offer a final im-

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pression. I came to skim and stayed to read every word. The figure of George Eliot, as it slowly builds into shape from these letters, is not god-like nor even grand; we see her in all her vulnerability, her debilitating enthusiasms and her irremovable weakness. But I cannot recall having read any letters or diaries in which the idea of intellectual devotion is realized with such blend of common humanity and selfless austerity. To read these letters is to feel—these words do not come to me frequently or lightly—a sense of elevation and purification. It is to learn that the life of the mind can be a thing of glory.

Survival in the Hydrogen Age

by Gordon Harrison

SEVEN years ago Thomas K. Finletter wrote a government committee report which read almost like a best-seller. Under the title of *Survival in the Air Age,* it presented to the citizen in lively and lucid prose the extraordinary demands which the atomic bomb put on our military defense. As the Finletter Report it became in time the principal brief and basic blueprint for the expansion of the Air Force. Now Mr. Finletter has written another report. It is readable, alarming, brilliant, and important. Like its predecessor it is a sober analysis of military reality and a plan for survival. Tragically, this time it does not represent official thinking.

Power and Policy, by Thomas K. Finletter (Harcourt, Brace; $5).

The first A-bomb that dropped on Japan ushered in a new era of strategy and policy. But momentous as was this break with the past, it was only the beginning of a rapid, continuing change, reshuffling the world balance of power and altering the very concept of national security. It is Mr. Finletter's main thesis that in this fast-moving situation policies and military means which meant security yesterday can tomorrow become fatal blundering and unpreparedness. Our thinking has scarcely comprehended the significance of Hiroshima at a time when the lesson of Hiroshima has been made obsolete by the H-bomb. Our military defenses are only barely adequate for a time when the enemy was too weak in atomic weapons and long-range aircraft seriously to threaten war, and that time is almost past.

The first phase of the atomic age beginning with Hiroshima was dominated by the A-bomb as the decisive weapon and by the fact that the United States alone had the bombs and the means to deliver them in effective quantity. Within two years, Mr. Finletter estimates, that phase will end. The Soviet Union by 1956 will have absolute air-atomic power —that is, enough bombs and long-range aircraft to knock out the United States. We will then enter Phase II—the period dominated by the H-bomb when nuclear weapons will be available to both the enemy and ourselves in any quantity needed for total destruction of all major cities and most industry on both sides. This new phase may last 10 years—if, indeed, the world lives through it. Sometime in the 1960s will begin Phase III when conventional piloted aircraft give way to guided inter-continental missiles with hydrogen warheads as the chief offensive weapons.

If all this sounds like a dream of science fiction, it is only because technology has already outstripped the non-technical imagination. We think of the A-bomb as a big bang, the H-bomb as a very big bang. The staggering figures of megatons of explosive power mean nothing; the concept of total destruction of an area 40 miles in diameter by a single bomb cannot be encompassed by the mind which stubbornly insists that even universal chaos must somehow spare me. Only recently a Western city staged an air-raid drill in which citizens in the downtown area solemnly walked out of the hypothetical target area to save themselves and civilization in the suburbs. This is not preparedness but a tragic childishness that cannot conceive any danger from which it is not possible to turn one's back and walk away.

If the authorities in Washington are more sophisticated, our military and foreign policy nevertheless rests on a large measure of outmoded and wishful thinking conditioned by a political unwillingness to disturb the complacency of the people or upset the routine of the Pentagon. Security can be forced into the strait jacket of economy because the requirements of security have been consistently misstated. Even though we know that a world duel with hydrogen bombs must be decisive within days or weeks of the initial attack we continue to base our strategy on the assumption that America's ultimate military strength is her industrial capacity. We concern ourselves with developing standby facilities for manufacturing armaments, worry about whether a concentration of tank production in Detroit makes us unduly vulnerable, debate plans for creating a large citizen reserve army, and even adopt the Communist thesis that prosperity and a balanced budget are essential ingredients in our struggle for survival. But if World War III will wipe out most of our factories in a single sneak attack—and the Soviet Union is unlikely to risk starting it unless reasonably assured of such a result—then industrial *capacity* has no relevance to our defense. Only the industrial *product* in being, ready for instant retaliatory use, has military meaning. Similarly if we assume—as we must—that a war so waged can have no victors then policy must aim at preventing it by making it perfectly obvious to the enemy that while he can destroy our cities and factories he cannot destroy our power to retaliate in kind. Again our strength must consist in an overwhelming Air Force in being, equipped with nuclear bombs, dispersed and protected by warning systems, and alert for immediate action. This ready force, and this alone, can act as a deterrent.

We have such a force but Mr. Finletter argues persuasively that it is growing relatively weaker as the Russian buildup continues. New appropriations for the Air Force for fiscal 1955 total about $12 billion. Mr. Finletter estimates they

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should total $20 billion if a retaliatory force and adequate air defense are to be built and maintained at a level that would clearly make war unprofitable to the Russians in Phase II. The figure must be somewhat arbitrary. Mr. Finletter uses it to suggest from his own experience as secretary of the Air Force the magnitude of the gap between what we have and what we need. While appropriations are not a wholly accurate measure of military strength they are far less misleading than other more technical criteria. Dollars, of course, can be wasted but there is no magic by which thriftiness can buy more than we pay for.

An increase of this size in our defense budget, economists agree, far from bankrupting us, would scarcely affect our standard of living. Mr. Finletter argues, however, not for vast new defense appropriations, but rather for a new rational distribution of the defense dollar better to create an armed force fitted to the needs of national policy. We have now a 19-division army soon to be converted into a 23-division force without increase in manpower. In announcing this change, the Army Chief of Staff explained that atomic warfare requiring dispersion on the battlefield and exacting high casualties would demand more combat troops. What he didn't explain is precisely what war he is planning for.

By the Korean truce and the decision not to intervene in Indo-China we have repudiated local wars—and rightly so. The project of defending the entire periphery of the free world by ground battle is a hopeless task and the effort to undertake it could only exhaust us. What Mr. Finletter calls the "part-way war" by which we fight on the ground and atom bomb selectively as it suits our military convenience without anticipating any corresponding enemy action or inviting general war is a concept that only General MacArthur has ever professed to understand and he has not explained it. We have, it is true, vital military and political commitments to maintain troops in Europe and at least in token numbers in the Far East. In peace these troops serve as a warning that we must and will resist aggression. But if war comes no one imagines that they will play a decisive part. The number actually required to meet all our current obligations including rotation and training is about half of what we now have. Elimination of the "general purpose" forces for which our basic policy of making atomic war impossible has no imme-

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diate use might save, Mr. Finletter estimates, the $8 billions a year needed to equip the Air Force for its priority task.

Having set up the problem and made clear the urgency of solving it, Mr. Finletter discusses at length the reasons for our failure so far. It is not a cheerful diagnosis. Some faults are organizational—the system, for instance, of arriving at a division of the defense dollar by compromise among the chiefs of the three services with the inevitable result that each gets roughly a third regardless of the relative priority of his needs. Some are political—like the insistence that we must have not only butter but jam along with our guns. Some are psychological. Americans can't believe that any foreigners can surpass us in production and technology—even when we aren't trying very hard. Having bought the A-bomb furthermore as a cheap defense, our inclination is to think the unpleasant business happily done with. The main fault, however, is the failure of leadership. Nowhere in the government is there a man or group of men charged with looking at policy and defense together. The basic decisions, therefore, relating military means to national ends simply don't ever get made.

The President, in the sense that he inherits customary procedures, is not to blame. Yet the fact remains that if the system is to be changed only he can change it. And if it is not changed, we will increasingly yield our power of deliberate action in the defense of our friends and ourselves.

The new Finletter Report is the first clear, comprehensive thinking on the problem of survival in the hydrogen age. One could wish that instead of writing it he had been in position to give it effect. Failing that, the next best thing would be to have it read by every American interested in living and seeing his children grow up.

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION required by the Act of Congress of August 24, 1912, as amended by the Acts of March 3, 1933, and July 2, 1946 (Title 39, United States Code, Section 233) of the New Republic published weekly at Washington, D. C., for Oct. 1, 1954.

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Signature of business manager
Sworn to and subscribed before me this 30th day of September, 1954.
IRENE N. MINNICK, Notary Public. My commission expires August 31, 1957.

THEATRE

I WISH it were possible to say that the Off Broadway theatre could offer us everything belonging to the theatre art except the trappings. But actors are not trappings, and the small, poverty-stricken theatre cannot offer us the best actors. Nor, in an ostentatious, external thing like theatre can "trappings" be lightly dismissed. My colleague on *The New Statesman* writes:

> Is there anything more depressing than well-intentioned but ill-conducted theatre endeavors conducted in totally unsuitable surroundings by earnestly highminded persons? The very essence of the theatre is an extravagance of bright lights, red plush, golden cupids, and vulgar excitement; the very antithesis is an austerity of wooden seats and unheated cellars.

Mr. Worsley hastens to add that wonderful things have happened in the cellars all the same, and I am going to use his remarks, not to suggest that the underground theatre should not exist, but to urge that it must needs offer a distinct alternative to the theatre above ground rather than a necessarily dim duplication of it.

If you simply do not have the leading actors, designers, directors, nor money enough for the finest stages and scenery, let alone for golden cupids, can you give me a good reason for buying a ticket at your theatre?

It is no good telling me that the Off Broadway theatre is a show-case for young actors. No one except an agent takes a seat for a reason like that—and he probably doesn't have to pay for it. All I, as prospective spectator, want to know is: what kind of a show is being offered? Now, what answers have the Off Broadway theatres been giving? The feeblest is: a re-staging of a Broadway show. However, it was less feeble when Circle in the Square managed to do a couple of Broadway plays as well as Broadway had done them. Only where did that lead? To Broadway, of course; producer, director, and leading actress are now there. I am not saying that Greenwich Village should not be a stepping-stone to Broadway for the individual artist. But while individuals come and go, the Off Broadway theatre is an institution, and as such it needs a stable character.

And on the whole it has been acknowledged that a Village theatre should not devote its energies to re-staging Broadway plays, grabbing Broadway plays before the uptown producers find them, or producing Broadway-type plays which do not make the Broadway grade. Two distinct alternatives have been proposed: new plays of a non-Broadway type and old plays which Broadway ignores. The famous Village theatres of the twenties elected the first alternative. And I am writing this column because two new groups have just appeared—The Players Theatre and Proscenium Productions — that have elected the second.

Having reported on the opening Broadway season rather gloomily two weeks ago, I am delighted to have good news to give of the Village. And let no one think I prejudged the issue. Having seen what I have seen in the past year or two, when I read that the Village would offer Garrick and Colman's *The Clandestine Marriage* and Congreve's *Way of the World* I fully intended to absent myself from both productions. Can comedy of manners be acted by Americans? In the Village? By youngsters?

And what youngsters? I had seen a valiant attempt (18 months ago at the De Lys on Christopher Street) to do *The School for Scandal*. There were several non-youngsters in it, professionals of name and, what is rarer, ability. And yet the evening was a squalid mixture of terrified hesitations and desperate aggressions, leaving in the mind, at eleven o'clock, just a gently unpleasant vibration, as after dramamine. (Etymol-

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ogists: work on this word!) So what could be done by these nameless ones from Wellesley and Carnegie Tech?

I leave the loud negative of my answer unspoken—because I was wrong. Deciding to see part of one of the shows, I found myself staying for the full length of both. They were—it is the finest word in dramatic criticism—good; and the first sign of this goodness came, as it must in the theatre, in immediate pleasure—"I enjoyed every minute of it." The immediate pleasure of the occasion gave place, afterwards, to some astonishment that, in a city where Shakespeare is generally a dull monstrosity, a group—two groups, rather—of young people have contrived to train themselves to speak classical comedy. And not only to speak it. There is a word—gait—whose archaism betrays the loss of a thing as well as an idea. "Manner of walking," says Webster. And what is harder than to walk rightly in non-modern costume, speaking, the while, in high comic style? The actor, we think nowadays, does not act, he is; and, last time, I was giving the example of John Kerr who makes his successes in parts where *none* of the old requirements of a great actor—heroic physique and bearing, richness of voice—are made; and, as for gait, in his latest part he goes on crutches.

Our two groups have been learning to speak, stand, walk, make gestures, but I should not give the impression that the two evenings have the air of classroom exercises. For one thing, there are some very striking actor-personalities in both groups, personality, on the stage, being what takes the curse off technique. Frederic Warriner, though an old stager compared with some of his colleagues, has never appeared to better advantage than as Garrick's senile amorist. Not every personality is so exactly right for its role. This is the case with Jacqueline Brooks whose romantic languor will not take a comic rhythm. Sometimes the personalities do not have the right relative weight. For instance, though Gerry Fleming's Millamant has a kind of beauty unusual in the theatre, Miss Fleming has not quite the force at present to be the cynosure of all eyes when Nancy Wickwire is on stage; for Miss Wickwire brings with youth and beauty a remarkable degree of vocal vehemence and control. For youthful companies, there were surprisingly few cases of vehemence *without* control. Once or twice, Sylvia Short errs in that direction, but I mention her chiefly to praise a very brilliant opening scene, a triumph of complexity for so young an actress, in which she uses her abundant vitality to best advantage, gloating and ecstasizing over a box of jewels. Thayer David is to be congratulated on a make-up that turned him into a Hogarth, and Jerry Stiller on being Jerry Stiller, the superb clown of last year's *Coriolanus*. If I am least grateful to the handsome young men of both plays, it is because the parts are the ungrateful ones (except when villainous: as Fainall, played with fine fervour by Fritz Weaver). Louis Edmonds does manly battle with Mirabell; one would have cast him for the role after seeing his bearing alone. Yet a certain indistinctness of what is miscalled diction interfered with no part so much as his, and here I cannot resist raising the general point: must American actors acquire a British accent in order to act English plays? If the acting coaches answer this question in the affirmative (as I do not), then may I submit that some actors think they have a British accent when they only have asthma? The simulation of a British accent is often only a simulation of certain common abuses of the voice among British actors, particularly a tightening of the throat with its resultant tight, "throaty"—and at the back of the house, inaudible—tone. Also, if American productions are going to be British, my ears demand that they be consistently so.

Comparisons are odious, but necessary. The two shows are of approximately equal quality. Neither director, thank Heaven, has jazzed the play up by setting it in 1920 or providing a Freudian interpretation of the heroine, and if I give a slightly higher mark to Warren Enters (*Way of the World*) than to the versatile Jack Landau (*Clandestine Marriage*), it is because he does not even burlesque the asides or have the actors bow on entering; and also because he has put across a much harder play. ERIC BENTLEY

Notes on the Critics

MALCOLM COWLEY's new book, *The Literary Situation*, will be published next week, as will *A Treasury of Yiddish Stories*, co-edited by IRVING HOWE. GORDON HARRISON is on the staff of the *Detroit News*. ERIC BENTLEY's new book, *Theatre Event*, is made up of his *NR* pieces.

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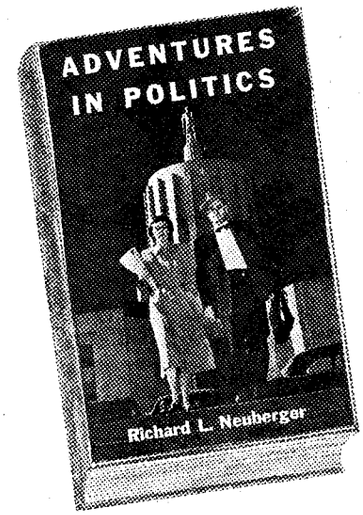

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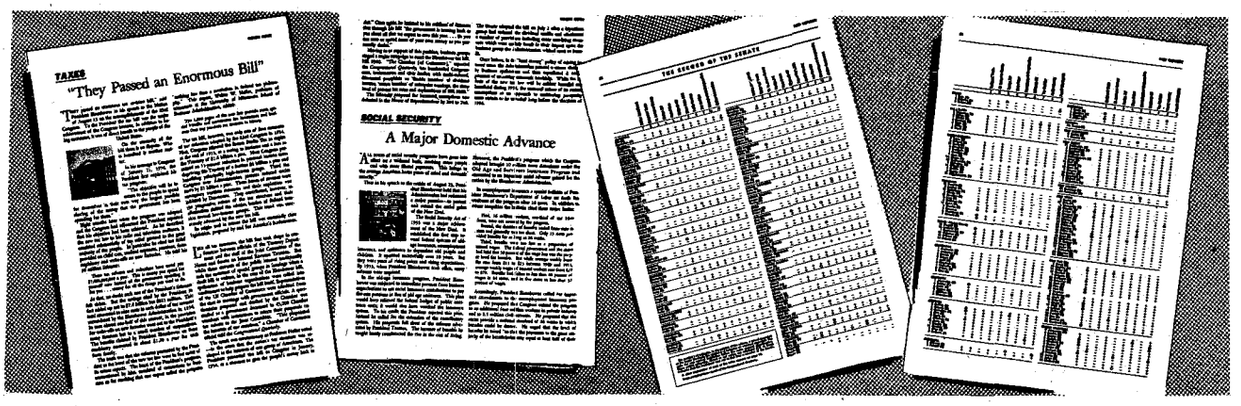

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